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8. THREE BIRD SPECIES SEEN FOR THE FIRST TIME IN SRI LANKA

A short visit (31 October to 11 November 1974) was made to Sri Lanka to see the many endemic birds that occur mostly in the forested areas. Several days of this trip were productively spent on the east coast in the Trincomalee district as far north as Pigeon Island.

The observer carried out four early morning sea watches and an interesting list of sea birds was noted which included the following three species previously unrecorded in Sri Lanka, species well known to him in parts of the world where they are of regular occurrence.

SOOTY SHEARWATER *Puffinus griseus*. Small dark coloured shearwaters were seen on most mornings of which the majority were too far

out at sea for accurate identification. A total of 15 birds came close inshore when the size, colour, mode of flight and silvery wing linings allowed positive identification.

BLACKHEADED GULLS *Larus ridibundus*. Two birds were seen together on 7th November in a flock of 23 Brownheaded Gulls *L. brunni-cephalus*.

ARCTIC SKUA *Stercorarius parasiticus*. Three dark phase birds were seen hunting together on 9 November. Their size in comparison with the Common Terns *Sterna hirundo* which they were harrying ruled out confusion with the larger Pomarine Skua *S. pomarinus* and the Great Skua *S. skua*.

120, MADELINE ROAD,
MORNINGSIDE,
DURBAN, 40001,
S. AFRICA,
January 13, 1976.

J. C. SINCLAIR

9. SPOTBILL DUCK (*ANAS P. POECILORHYNCHA*) FORSTER NESTING IN A TREE

(With a plate)

In a reedless pond of the Victoria Park, Bhavnagar, stands a solitary stunted Babul (*Acacia nilotica*), a relict of the past, half dead and much of the tree covered by a parasitic climber (*Cassytha filiformis*) forming a thick mesh

over it. The tree was about ten feet high and in its middle, about 4 feet above the water, was placed the nest of the Spotbill. This is the first nest I have seen of this species in a tree. The extraordinary part of this dis-